

VZCZCXRO9531
RR RUEHMA RUEHPA
DE RUEHNV #0965 3301824
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 251824Z NOV 08
FM AMEMBASSY MONROVIA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0564
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS MONROVIA 000965

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O.12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [UN](#) [LI](#)

SUBJECT: LIBERIA: TAYLOR CONFIDANT MAURICE COOPER DIES

¶1. (SBU) Maurice Cooper, a confidant and informal advisor to former President Charles Taylor, died on August 10, 2008 and was buried at Cooper Farm, Cinta, Margibi County on August 20, 2008. Maurice Cooper's name has been on the UN Travel Ban List concerning Liberia since 2001 as an "associate of former Liberian President Charles Taylor with ongoing ties to him."

¶2. (SBU) According to a family source, Maurice Cooper died of bronchitis at Firestone Hospital in Harbel. He reportedly died penniless and even getting money to pay his medical bills was problematic. Cooper was divorced; his ex-wife runs La Pointe Restaurant, located near the Embassy.

¶3. (SBU) At the height of Taylor's presidency, Cooper had stakes in Liberia's timber and telecommunications industries. Cooper and his brothers owned and operated the Inland Group of Companies, which extracted and exported timber and rubber to Asia and Europe. The Inland Group of Companies was based in Greenville, Sinoe County, and raised its own militia force that was engaged in extra judicial activities in southeastern Liberia. Maurice Cooper's brother, Oscar Cooper, singlehandedly operated the seaport at Greenville and was reported to have imported arms shipments there for use by forces loyal to former President Charles Taylor.

¶4. (SBU) Comment: The low key manner in which Maurice Cooper's death was handled by his brothers is indicative of how, with a few exceptions, Taylor cronies prefer to lie low.

THOMAS-GREENFIELD